



THE RESPONDER

TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE • JERRY PATTERSON, COMMISSIONER
OIL SPILL PREVENTION AND RESPONSE PROGRAM • JUNE 2013



GLO Responds to Supply Vessel

On March 4, the supply vessel *International Carrier* ran aground in the Gulf of Mexico off of privately owned San Jose Island with 10,000 gallons of diesel aboard. General Land Office Senior Response Officer (SRO) James Duenes and U.S. Coast Guard - Sector Corpus Christi Chief Creager responded to the grounding aboard the GLO's 25-foot response boat. Upon arrival at San Jose Island, SRO Duenes discovered that the *International Carrier* was still afloat and had lost steering due to an air compressor failure. Chief Creager contacted the captain of the vessel and asked if the crew wanted to be extracted from the vessel; the captain and crew refused and chose to stay put. SRO Duenes and Chief Creager then contacted the owners of the vessel to discuss options for a salvage plan. The next day, a MAMMOET salvage representative arrived at the site and discussed options with the GLO and USCG. Once the salvage plan was approved, the vessel was rigged with tow

lines to a tow boat and salvage operations commenced. The GLO and USCG monitored salvage operations along with the San Jose Island manager. After 12 hours of salvage operations and the arrival of a high tide, the vessel was freed and pulled into deeper water. The vessel was towed to Ingleside for damage assessment and repairs.



The supply vessel *International Carrier* aground in the surf at San Jose Island.

Annual Maritime Youth Expo a Success for Local Students

The annual Maritime Youth Expo was recently held at the Bayport Cruise Terminal and proved to be a learning experience for all. More than 200 local high school students were invited to the expo to learn about career opportunities in the maritime and logistics industries. Texas General Land Office Response Officers Gray Powell, Jesse Mayorga and Angela Jarvis met with students who wanted to learn about the daily activities of an Oil Spill Responder and the qualifications needed for a job with the GLO Oil Spill Prevention and Response Program. GLO Region

2 personnel brought their airboat to the expo, answering questions about its use and the knowledge needed to operate various types of response equipment. The Maritime Youth Expo also offered hands-on activities, a variety of on-water boat demonstrations and a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter demonstration for the students. The expo continues to be a great opportunity for area high school maritime students and Sea Scouts to learn about career paths in the maritime and logistics industries, as well as the Armed Forces, in a fun and interesting atmosphere.

ECM Houston Spill Management Team Exercise

On April 10, ECM Maritime Services, LLC conducted an integrated Oil Spill Response exercise. As with any exercise, the responding organization and the response community have a unique opportunity to come together in a non-threatening environment to validate their response plans. "We have the chance to work together, in some cases, for the first time to battle a simulated spill event," said Richard Arnhart, State On-Scene Coordinator for the spill exercise. "If we make mistakes now and learn from them here, we'll be better prepared for the actual event when it occurs." The scenario involved a collision at the intersection of the Bayport and Houston ship channels, resulting in damage to one vessel's port-side ballast and fuel oil tanks.

The Incident Command System (ICS) was utilized and a Unified Command (UC) was established to manage the simulated oil spill event. The lessons learned in this and other exercises will prove invaluable when a real spill event occurs.



Members of the Planning Section developing an Incident Action Plan.

EDUCATE ♦ PREVENT ♦ RESPOND

Response Efficiency

Recently, Region 5 of the Oil Spill Prevention and Response Program—a division of the Texas General Land Office—repositioned response equipment to reduce response times in areas where critical habitat is present.

To better respond to the marsh and whooping crane habitat at Welder Flats and Turn Stake Island (where the Victoria Barge Canal and Gulf Intracoastal Waterway meet), Region 5 has moved two trailers filled with 18' hard boom, absorbents, 10' harbor boom and Expandi boom from Welder Flats to Charlie's Bait Camp. This enables Region 5 to establish a forward staging area in the event of a spill in this sensitive area. Charlie's Bait Camp provides ample parking and fuel, as well as a boat ramp where two vessels can launch simultaneously. It's easily accessible from public roadways that are useable in all weather conditions. Most importantly, this location will allow spill response equipment to be easily and quickly loaded into vessels from the staged trailers or other response trailers. Airboats departing from Charlie's Bait Camp will have a short 5-mile run down the GIWW in waters protected from the prevailing south winds. The protection the GIWW spoil provides from these winds will make airboat operation—critical for response in shallow

marsh—possible during any condition.

Additionally, Region 5 intends to reduce maintenance costs by decreasing the number of response trailers by one and moving an existing trailer at Ineos, a facility on the Victoria Barge Canal, to Pickering Basin at the Port of Victoria. There are three large petroleum transfer facilities at Pickering Basin which load crude from Eagle Ford Shale onto barges. This trailer move will not only reduce maintenance costs, but also places Region 5's equipment in an area where a significant spill could occur. As an added bonus, more industry responders can access the trailer and its response equipment.

The Region 5 Oil Spill Office has also formed a partnership with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) Wildlife Division at Mad Island Wildlife Management Area (WMA). After speaking with Matt Nelson, the TPWD Coastal Program Director, a plan was developed to expand the GLO's relationship with the TPWD on Matagorda Island. Currently, a vehicle donated by the GLO is used on Matagorda Island by TPWD and Region 5 personnel to conduct beach patrols in search of tar balls. Without this partnership two ATVs would have to be transported by vessel to the Island every time a beach patrol is conducted. To take this partnership further, a new response trailer has now been stationed at the TPWD WMA. This will allow the GLO to better protect the marsh areas of Crab Lake, Freshwater Lake, Rattlesnake Lake and Oyster Lake. Furthermore, TPWD personnel on site at the WMA are able to watch over the trailer, ensuring its security. In the event of a spill, they will be able to tow the trailer and assist in loading boom onto an airboat with the first responders. Experienced TPWD personnel are always helpful in expediting a response and helping to keep Texas marshes clean.

Combined, these efforts will allow Region 5 to efficiently achieve its OSPR duties by decreasing response times to spills in areas that are designated critical habitat.

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Report oil spills
1-800-832-8224
24 hours

The Responder is published by the Texas General Land Office.
Questions and comments may be submitted to Angela Jarvis
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When operations don't go as planned.

The Baytown Nature Center: Combined Efforts Produce Wonderful Restoration Results

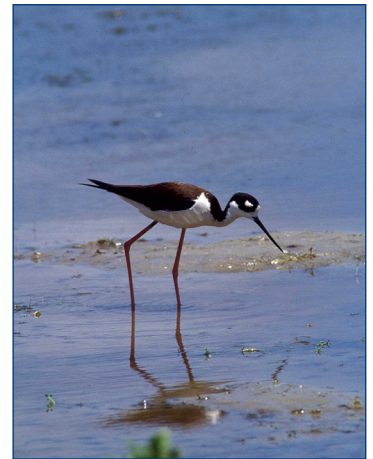
The Baytown Nature Center, located in Chambers County on Upper Galveston Bay, is a great example of what Texas Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDA) trustees can accomplish. The location of the Baytown Nature Center has a storied past. It was once inhabited by the Arkokisa tribe of Native Americans until the 1830s and still holds many clues of their existence, such as shell middens, pieces of pottery and fishing spearheads. In the early 1900s, the site was sold to the Brown family which subsequently subdivided and sold the lots to Humble Oil Company for executive housing during the 1930s and 1940s. When the development of subdivisions was at its height, there were 360 homes within the Brownwood subdivision, where residents could enjoy the life and amenities associated with bay-side living. Little did they know that extraction of oil, gas and water would cause the ground to subside 10 to 15 feet, causing some lots and homes to be lost to the tides. In addition, Hurricane Carla dealt a significant setback and stopped further development in the Brownwood subdivision. The subdivision suffered its final blow with Hurricane Alicia in 1983.

With most of the homes and lots left in ruins, the City of Baytown began the legal process to buy and remove the damaged structures; it took 10 years and several bond packages to start the cleanup. A new era began with the removal of the residential debris as part of a movement to return the area back to its natural-

state. NRDA became a critical funding component in completing the master plan to make the unusable land suitable for wildlife and nature. Initially, in the early 1990s, a Superfund consortium of 200 companies was given a court order to carry

out a marsh restoration project to replace natural resources damaged or destroyed by members' illegal dumping activities. The resulting NRDA settlement included marsh restoration, removal of old roadways and debris, dredging, creating wetlands and placement of culverts to enhance marsh circulation within the old Brownwood subdivision area. In October 1994, a major flood occurred on the San Jacinto River just to the north of the Nature Center, leading to the rupture of a pipeline. This resulted in the discharge of 1.45 million gallons of diesel, gasoline and crude oil that caught on fire. A NRDA was completed and the trustee agencies sought compensation from Colonial Pipeline/Texaco for the damages. The trustees identified the Baytown Nature Center as a perfect place to conduct restoration and an additional nine acres of estuarine marsh were planted using volunteers.

As it is now, it's hard to believe that a subdivision was ever there. The Nature Center is used by local schools and master naturalists to foster awareness of coastal ecosystems and their importance to our culture and economy. There are numerous bird viewing platforms, hiking trails, piers and observation blinds for the public to use. The Baytown Nature Center is home to 317 species of birds and is a designated stop on the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail. In addition, the new marsh provides habitat and nursery grounds for shrimp, fish, crabs and many other aquatic species. The Baytown Nature Center is open to the public year round; admission is \$3 for visitors 12 years and older, and free for those under 12



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What is NRDA?

Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) is a cooperative process between state and federal Trustee Agencies—and when possible, the Responsible Party—to ensure that damages resulting from oil or hazardous substance spills are restored or replaced. This involves a cost-effective assessment, restoration and planning process which benefits all parties involved. In addition, the trustees ensure that lost services formerly provided by the resources are returned to the condition they were in before the spill. Examples include preserving critical habitat, constructing wetlands, and improving recreational opportunities with the construction of piers, wildlife viewing platforms, boat

ramps, etc.

The Governor of Texas has designated the Texas General Land Office, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality as state trustees to act on behalf of the public. Along with two federal agencies—the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service—these agencies compose the Texas Trustee Council. The Texas Trustee Council identifies damages to trust

resources and seeks compensation from the Responsible Parties to restore those resources during the NRDA process.



Patrols

Patrols account for a large portion of daily work activities for the Texas General Land Office's Oil Spill Prevention and Response Program. The terms "patrol" and "on patrol" refer to what Response Officers do when they're not responding to spill events, conducting audits or inspections, or engaged in preparedness or educational activities. Response Officers use everything from trucks and boats, to ATVs and walking to make their rounds. While on patrol, they look for oil spills, compliance violations, unsafe conditions and suspicious activities. They also take time to interact with industry personnel and the public and always looking for an opportunity to

increase oil spill awareness and education.

Given the dramatic drop in spills in Texas coastal waters and the consistent presence of Response Officers, it's likely these patrols are having a positive impact on our environment.



Boat Patrol on the Texas City Ship Channel.

Barber Middle School Career Day



Trey Trahan demonstrates the GLO Response Airboat to the students.

Barber Middle School fifth- and sixth-graders recently had their annual Career Day, and Trey Trahan, Jesse Mayorga and Angela Jarvis of Region 2's Oil Spill Division were on hand to discuss the requirements and responsibilities of being a Responder with the GLO Oil

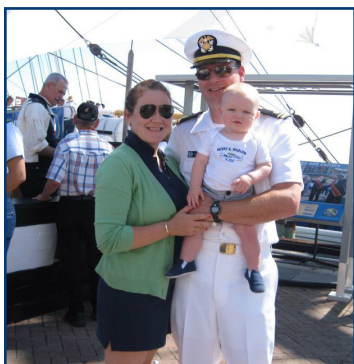
Spill Prevention and Response Program. The students had the opportunity to check out the GLO Response Airboat, and talk with Trahan, Mayorga and Jarvis about oil spills they've responded to and their efforts to prevent oil spills through outreach and education. The students were shown photographs of past spills and enjoyed a hands-on experience with response equipment. It was a busy day with approximately 680 students, all eager to learn about the Oil Spill Program and the effort required to maintain our waterways and coastline.

Hellos and Goodbyes in the Spill Response Community

LTJG Kyle Jellison

The Texas General Land Office welcomes LTJG Kyle Jellison, a NOAA Scientific Support Coordinator (SSC) for NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration, to our spill response community. Jellison is a NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps officer assigned to New Orleans, where he provided Federal On-Scene Coordinators with mission critical scientific information for response to and planning for oil and hazardous material releases in the Gulf of Mexico region. He filled the void created when long-time NOAA SSC Charlie Henry departed to direct the NOAA Gulf of Mexico Disaster Response Center in Mobile, AL. Jellison arrived in September 2012 and has already responded to numerous spills and drills. He has also worked alongside the GLO State SSC, Steve Buschang, to provide SCAT training and guidance to the U.S. Coast Guard, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and GLO Responders, and is engaged with Area Committees throughout the region.

Jellison and his family currently reside on the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain and are enjoying the Louisiana lifestyle of crabbing, shooting, and "bon temps." Prior to this, Jellison served aboard



LTJG Kyle Jellison and family.

Michael K. Sams, U.S. Coast Guard

Incident Management and Preparedness Advisor

The Texas General Land Office would like to welcome Mike Sams, Incident Management and Preparedness Advisor, to USCG District 8 in New Orleans. In June 2012, Sams became the first Incident Management and Preparedness Advisor for the Eighth Coast Guard District. He serves as the district's lead expert on USCG operations and connectivity under the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan and the National Response Framework. Sams also serves as the link between the Eighth Coast Guard District and the regional intergovernmental response community, as a deployable response resource coordinator, and as a technical advisor to the District Commander. He's responsible for integrating USCG plans with the regional intergovernmental operating plans, and ensuring that the preparedness cycle of planning, training, exercising, evaluating and revising is continually implemented. In addition, Sams serves as the co-chair of the Federal EPA Region 7 and Region 8 Regional Response Teams, the alternate co-chair of the Region 6 Regional Response Team, and is the alternate co-chair for the Mexico/United States Joint Response Team.

Prior to joining the Eighth Coast Guard District staff, Sams served on active duty in the USCG, retiring with the rank of Commander in 2012.

Sams has been working closely with the GLO to ensure that participation remains high and USCG efforts complement our state's needs, programs and products. He has been making the rounds, presenting at local Area Committee meetings and at RRT Regional meetings. Mike, welcome aboard!



Mike Sams.